

Key Ideas from the Keys to Quality Accreditation Project



Key Idea: **Tips for Keys to Quality Sites** By Peggy Hayden, Keys to Quality Staff

1. Be organized. Use a filing system or notebook to organize information and legal documents needed for the validator's visit (see *Guide to Accreditation*). Review the Guide carefully, noting support for your ratings in the documentation you gather. For example; the staff at one site used a file box with the following headings:

Administrative Report, Application, Calendar of Events, Correspondence (Keys to Quality), Envelope for Mailing, Improvement Plans, Information on Community Partner, NAEYC Procedures, Family Questionnaires, Presentations for (1) School Committee and (2) Faculty, Program Description, Regular Education ECCOs, Special Education ECCOs, Staff Questionnaires, Support Personnel, Teacher Credentials, and Timeline
2. It helps to have one person who has read all the material and knows what needs to be done. This should be combined with teamwork of all players rather than limiting responsibility to one or two people.
3. Work with administrative staff and your board. Their support is very important. Keep them informed and give them plenty of notice when you need things from them.
4. Set up a reasonable timeline of what needs to be done, who will do it, and when it is due. Then stick to it! See our project task and timelines sheet that have been provided for you.
5. Technical assistance (TA) from an outside consultant (such as our KQ staff) helps keep sites on track. Provide ideas and sites deal objectively with program improvements.
6. Team work is important - sharing the workload and commitment to quality improvement which will also means being willing to change.
7. Visit other sites that have been accredited. The Keys to Quality staff have these listed in a resource called "Coaching Sites for RI Keys to Quality Accreditation Project."

8. Strategies for dealing with parent questionnaires include:
 - a. Giving the questionnaires to all parents during conferences. Then send out a letter, following up with a second form if needed.
 - b. Collect questionnaires from parents personally rather than asking parents to return them to the program.
 - c. Use college students/volunteers to interview parents during drop off and pickup time
 - d. Collect at a parent meeting with coffee and donuts
 - e. Attach coupon for returning survey
 - f. Use materials that are in the parents' native language (we have materials in English, Spanish, and Portuguese)
 - g. Communicate with families through a parent bulletin board
2. Finding the time to meet as a self study team to plan and manage paperwork includes:
 - a. Use substitutes
 - b. Meet at lunch
 - c. Meet before and after school
 - d. Meet as part of regularly scheduled meetings
 - e. Use aides and other related staff to assist with self study materials

For more information, contact the Keys to Quality Project by contacting the RI Department of Education, Preschool Grant Coordinator, 401/222-4600 x 2408, e-mail: abcohen@ride.ri.net or CHILDSPAN at 401/729-0765, e-mail: RJCTS@intap.net.